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given "ill names" by their parents, whereas "the mischievous and thievish were formerly sure to be dry-scratched." [88]

The lack of concern of a father regarding the bringing up of his offspring was due, not, as Swan seems to suppose, to unnatural indifference but to the fact that he was of a distinct clan and the bringing up fell first to the mother and then to the other adults of the clan to which she and her children belonged. In every clan [88a] in each town there was one man (a pawa, "maternal uncle") looked to to keep his eye on the young people in his clan, lecture them at the annual busk and at other times, and if necessary chastise them. This man would theoretically be the oldest male clansman, but in fact was probably the oldest influential member. Perhaps the Dog-King, mentioned above, was the maternal uncle of those children and young people whom Adair saw him correcting, though the reference to his title indicates the possibility that he had some more general function in the Chickasaw community.

861

Stress should be laid on Swan's statement that scratching was a part of the hardening process intended for the development of capable warriors.

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A regulation strictly observed in early times was a daily bath in the nearest body of water. The Texas Alabama state that all of the able-bodied people—men, women, and children—as soon as they got up in the morning and before they went to the fire used to repair to the nearest creek and plunge under water four times. This act was supposed to make them live long, and parents forced their children to bathe thus even if they had to whip them. If snow were on the ground a person was allowed to roll in it four times instead.

The antiquity of this custom is indicated by its appearance in one of the older Alabama stories in which a bird called tciktcikáno' plunges under water four times in the prescribed manner. Bossu, who knew these Indians in the middle of the eighteenth century, also lays stress upon it. He says that "the children at the breast are bathed in winter in cold water," and when they were older they went, after the bath, "to present themselves before the war chief who makes them a speech, telling them that they ought never to be afraid of the water, that they may be pursued by their enemies, that if they are taken they are placed in the frame (cadre) and burned alive, that it is then that they must prove by refraining from weeping that they are true men.

"The speech finished, the chief scarifies their thighs, breast, back, in order to harden them against discomfort, and afterward he gives them heavy blows with a neck band (a carrying strap)." [90]

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[88] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 413.

[88a] Or clan group; see pp. 122-123.

[90] Bossu, Nouv. Voy., vol. II, pp. 24-25.

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of relationship.[a] In the quotation given above he makes another blunder when he assumes that from the apparent indifference exhibited by an Indian couple when they meet after a long separation a constitutional "phlegmatic coldness and indifference" may be inferred. The self-restraint and seeming unconcern exhibited was simply a native custom from which nothing at all regarding the real feelings could be deduced. It may be added that the hard life of Indian women to which he refers was not usually considered hard by them but as the customary and essential, and it was in large measure but their share of a life which was harder all around than the lives of many civilized human beings. It was certainly not as hard as the lives of many of our sweatshop and mill operatives, and there is this to be said for it besides that it did not exist side by side with and thereby shame a theoretically lofty moral standard. On the other hand the "care and attention" which Creek women bestowed upon their men must be read in connection with the drastic regulations to which a widow was subjected.[aa] Collective virtues and vices are so closely bound up with economic conditions that it would be easy to show how both as they exist among Indians show to advantage or suffer in comparison with virtues and vices among ourselves. It is probably true also that white contact by putting an end to intertribal warfare and to hunting, the chief occupations of the men in olden times, has shown up the division of labor between men and women with some disadvantage to the men, because the old traditions regarding division of labor have persisted into a period when a new arrangement is rendered necessary. This is not said with the idea of justifying Indian or European customs. Some of these were doubtless due to economic conditions which were indeed their sufficient excuse at one time. Many, too, may be perversions of customs which once had some reason for their existence though the perversions themselves have not and never had any such basis. In these cases history may furnish a palliation and an excuse but it can not give a justification, and the sooner such custom is abolished the better.

It is not just then to condemn the Creeks on account of some of their customs or to praise them overmuch on account of others. But, abstracting the customs themselves from the people, we may say that those of the Creeks were upon the whole on a distinctly higher level than the customs of most of the hunting tribes of American Indians and indeed than those of most of the agricultural tribes about them.

BURIAL

In the accounts of burial customs, as well as in those of marriages, there are considerable differences, and here again it is evident that

[a] See p. 376. [aa] See pp. 383-384.

1 [i.e., Swan.--Analyst]

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Adair and Swan both remark on the apparent coldness exhibited by a married couple on meeting after a long separation. Adair says:

"I shall give an instance of this [incapability for lasting affection]. If the husband has been a year absent on a visit to another nation, and should by chance overtake his wife near home, with one of his children skipping along side of her; instead of those sudden and strong emotions of joy that naturally arise in two generous breasts at such an unexpected meeting, the self-interested pair go along as utter strangers, without seeming to take the least notice of one another, till a considerable time after they get home." [95]

Swan says:

"When a man meets his wife and children, after the absence of some months, in which time she has not heard a word from him, it is with a perfect seeming indifference. Perhaps the first word spoken will be—So, you have got back again, I see. He answers—Yes. She may then reply—Momuscha [Mohmistca]—i. e., Very well—and there ends the conversation. The man reserves the tale of his adventures, to be told to his other friends over a cup of black drink the next morning, at the square; and there it is retailed, in a tedious, circumlocutory conversation of many hours." [96]

As I have explained in another connection this "coldness" was principally etiquette and custom rather than native character.

The terms for "husband" and "wife" were not used by a married couple, because it was thought a married pair were too nearly connected to employ anything so formal. If they had to use any expression it would be "my old man" or "my old woman."

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A man would not speak to his mother-in-law nor a woman to her father-in-law, or vice versa. They communicated through the wife or the husband. One of these tabooed couples would go a long way around to avoid meeting the other, and it was thought that if they did speak to each other or even touch each other they would itch all over. In speaking about such a person the other used the dual number. This information was obtained particularly from the Alabama in Texas. Chickasaw custom was about the same.

The usage may have differed among the constituent tribes of the Confederacy, however, for one of the best living authorities on old Creek customs (1924) declares that there was no regulation of "bashfulness" in force between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and that the only time when the latter avoided his mother-in-law was for about a week before and a week after his marriage because he was actually bashful.

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If the Indians have friendly dealings with you they always want to associate you with them in some way, particularly by giving you sofki or other food, as has happened several times in my own case.

[95] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 99.

[96] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, p. 274-275.